

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 12, 20, 23 and 29, and cancel claims 6, 7, 19 and 21 without prejudice, such that the status of the claims is as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A suspension assembly comprising:

a slider supporting a read/write head; ~~and~~

a multi-layer laminate substrate having a base layer, an insulator layer and a conductor layer, the laminate substrate further comprising an attachment region for attaching to an actuator arm, a load beam region, a flexure region for supporting the slider, and an interconnect path extending along the flexure region, the load beam region and the attachment region, wherein the interconnect path terminates at the attachment region at a plurality of connection points that collectively provide an electro-mechanical connection between the multi-layer laminate substrate and the actuator arm; and

a stiffener member defined by the conductor layer wherein the stiffener member is not electrically connected to the interconnect path, wherein the stiffener member is positioned along the load beam region.

2. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 1 wherein the base layer defines a top surface of the suspension assembly and the conductor layer defines a bottom surface of the suspension assembly.

3. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 2 wherein a rail defined by at least the base layer extends from the top surface of the suspension assembly.

4. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 1 wherein a portion of the base layer has a thickness greater than a remainder of the base layer.

5. (Previously amended) The suspension assembly of claim 1 wherein the interconnect path is defined by the insulator layer and the conductor layer, and further wherein the connection points are defined by the conductor layer.

6-7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously amended) The suspension assembly of claim 6 wherein the stiffener member is positioned along the attachment region.

9. (Previously amended) The suspension assembly of claim 1, and further comprising solder connections between the connection points and the actuator arm.

10. (Previously amended) The suspension assembly of claim 1, and further comprising a conductive adhesive for connecting the connection points and the actuator arm.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A suspension assembly comprising:

a multi-layer laminate substrate, the laminate substrate having a first end and a second end, and the laminate substrate having an attachment region at the first end for both mechanically and electrically connecting the multi-layer laminate substrate to an actuation assembly, a support region at the second end for supporting an item, a flexible region between the attachment region and the support region, and an interconnect path extending along a bottom surface of the laminate substrate from the support region to the attachment region, wherein the interconnect path further comprises a plurality of interconnect pads located at the attachment region, wherein the suspension

actuation assembly is both mechanically and electrically connected to the actuation assembly at a plurality of the interconnect pads, and wherein the interconnect pads are positioned proximate the flexible region.

13. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 12 wherein the multi-layer laminate substrate comprises a base layer forming a top surface of the laminate substrate, a conductor layer forming the bottom surface of the laminate substrate and an insulator layer sandwiched between the base layer and the conductor layer.

14. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 13 wherein the interconnect path is defined by the insulator layer and the conductor layer.

15. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 13, and further comprising a stiffener plate defined by the conductor layer wherein the stiffener plate is not electrically connected to the interconnect path.

16. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 13, and further comprising a rail defined by at least the base layer extending from the top surface.

17. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 16 wherein the multi-layer laminate substrate includes first and second edges extending between the first end and the second end, the rail comprising a first rail formed by a portion of the first edge and the laminate substrate further comprising a second rail formed by a portion of the second edge.

18. (Original) The suspension assembly of claim 13 wherein a portion of the base layer has a thickness greater than a remainder of the base layer.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) The suspension assembly of claim ~~19~~ 12 wherein the interconnect pads are positioned adjacent the first end of the multi-layer laminate substrate.

21-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) An assembly for mechanically and electrically linking an actuator arm with a slider supporting a read/write head proximate a rotating disc, the assembly comprising:

a multi-layer substrate having an attachment region for attachment to an actuator arm, a load beam region, a flexure region for supporting a slider and an interconnect path, the multi-layer substrate including a first end at the attachment region and a second end at the flexure region with the load beam region positioned therebetween;

wherein the multi-layer substrate has a support layer defining a top surface of the substrate, an insulator layer and a conductor layer defining a bottom surface of the substrate, the interconnect path being defined by the insulator layer and the conductor layer; ~~and~~

wherein the interconnect path terminates at the attachment region at a connection point to provide an electro-mechanical attachment to the actuator arm; and wherein the electro-mechanical connection is the only connection between the multi-layer laminate substrate and the actuator arm.

24. (Original) The assembly of claim 23, and further comprising a stiffener plate defined by the conductor layer.

25. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the multi-layer substrate further comprises a rail formed by a portion of the support layer and extending from the top surface of the substrate.

26. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein a portion of the support layer has a thickness greater than a remainder of the support layer.

27. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the interconnect path further comprises an interconnect pad at the attachment region for electro-mechanical attachment to the actuator arm.

28. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the substrate further comprises a void formed in the load beam region adjacent the attachment region.

29. (Currently Amended) A data storage device comprising:

a storage medium;

a slider;

a read/write head supported by the slider for reading and writing data to and from the storage medium;

an actuator arm assembly; and

an integrated suspension assembly including an attachment region having multiple ~~electrical~~ electro-mechanical connection points that collectively provide a mechanical attachment to the actuator arm assembly and electrical connections to the actuator arm assembly without additional mechanical or electrical connections therebetween, a load beam region, flexure region for supporting the slider, and an interconnect path extending along the flexure region, the load beam region and the attachment region to electrically connect the slider to the actuator arm assembly, the integrated suspension assembly further comprises a multi-layer laminate substrate having a support layer, an

insulator layer and a conductor layer wherein the interconnect path is defined by the insulator layer and the conductor layer.